



## Commission Meeting Minutes

The following are the minutes of the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission meeting. The meeting was held on Saturday, September 4, 2021. Heber City Police Department Community Room 301 South Main Street Heber, UT 84032

Note: A copy of meeting materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found on the Public Notice Website. The minutes may refer to the recording found on the Public Notice Website with the approximate number on the recording where an issue is being discussed.

### **Attendance - Commission Members**

Chair, Utah Independent Redistricting Commission - Rex Facer  
Commissioner Karen Hale  
Commissioner Lyle Hillyard  
Commissioner Jeff Baker  
Commissioner William Thorne  
Commissioner Robert Bishop

### **Attendance - Staff and Others in Attendance at Anchor Location:**

Gordon Haight, Executive Director  
Aly Escobar, Administrative Coordinator  
Beau Bayless  
Julianne Kidd  
Sariah Morey  
Joey Fica

### **Attendance – Public in Attendance**

Katie Wright, Better Boundaries  
Lynne Ruttan  
Kris Campbell, Leadership Park City  
Meaghan Miller Gitlin, Midway  
Katy Owens Hubler, Pinebrook  
Jennifer Lee  
Andy Beerman, Park City Mayor  
Mary Dillon  
Julie Hines, League of Women Voters  
Margaret Olson, Summit County Attorney  
Peter Wright  
Amy Mills  
Bill Goodall  
Terri Goodall  
Mary Wright  
Marsha Klarberg, Park City  
Marianne Cone Chaplin, League of Women Voters  
Lola Beatlebrox, Peoa City  
Ed Ruttan  
Jill Leah  
Danny Fugal

## **I. Open House**

At the start of the meeting, an open house was held to allow the public to view drafted maps.

## **II. Public Hearing 1:00 P.M.**

Chair Facer began the meeting at 12:22 PM

## **III. Welcome – Chair Rex Facer**

Chair Facer welcomed everyone and introduced the commissioners in attendance, noting that Commissioner Durham was not in attendance. He also thanked the commissioners for their work. He noted a few local elected officials in attendance and recognized Glenn Wright from Summit County and Park City Mayor Andy Beerman. Chair Facer also noted that Katie Wright from Better Boundaries was in attendance and explained that while Better Boundaries helped in the creation of the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission they are not related.

## **IV. Presentation: Redistricting Process – Rex Facer**

Chair Facer moved to the next item and stated that he would explain some of the process of redistricting and how the commissioner functions.

He began by explaining that Proposition 4 in 2018 began the creation of the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission and after some compromise legislation in 2020 the commission was created. He explained that three commissioners were appointed by the Republican Legislative Leadership, and three were appointed by the Democratic Legislative Leadership. He explained that Commissioner Baker and Commissioner Thorne are independent of any party and that Chair Facer himself was appointed by the Governor.

Chair Facer then explained that commissioners had been meeting for several months to understand the task ahead of them. He explained that in a normal year the commissioners would have been mapping earlier than they did, but that the Census data had been delayed due to COVID. Chair Facer then stated that one of the decisions the commissioners had decided on in those initial meetings was to be as transparent as possible. He informed everyone that this meeting was being broadcast live on YouTube.

Chair Facer then went on to explain the criteria to be used by the commission. More information about these criteria can be found here: <https://uirc.utah.gov/uirc-meeting/synopsis-criteria-and-standards/>

In this explanation, Chair Facer mentioned the requirements for equal populations as being the fundamental criteria as the commissioner works to create maps for the Utah Congressional seats, Utah House, Utah Senate, and State School Board. He presented the various population numbers for each map type. Those numbers can be found at the above link. He explained that there is some deviation allowed in the various districts, but that it is limited. He then talked about how even for the relatively small house districts, counties may not have the required population for a district. He then explained that the question then becomes what counties should be put with one another. He stated that the commissioners were

seeking public input to help understand what areas to put together, and to understand how to split an area if it needs to be split.

Chair Facer then informed the audience that this meeting was not the only chance to provide input, and that future meetings would be livestreamed and drafted maps would be available online. He then moved to explain the additional criteria adopted by the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission which can be found in the above link. He mentioned that the commissioners have decided not to consider political data as they map.

#### **V. Presentation: Heber Mayor Kelleen Potter**

#### **VI. Presentation: Oakley Mayor Woolstenhulme**

#### **VII. Presentation: Park City Mayor Andy Beerman**

Chair Facer moved on and stated that the commissioners would like to hear some comments from the elected officials present and turned the time to Mayor Beerman.

Mayor Beerman thanked the commissioners for their work and noted the importance of creating good boundaries as well as the difficulty in creating boundaries that everyone agrees are good. He noted appreciation for the criteria adopted. He explained that from the viewpoint of Park City they would like to remain together, and that the greater Park City area includes more than just the Park City boundaries and that the area is united by a similar lifestyle and the tourism industry. Understanding that the greater Park City area is too small to be a district, he explained that many residents work and commute in the Wasatch Front, and that many people commute into Park City to work. He also noted that there are some strong connections to the Wasatch Back as well, and suggested that commissioners look to the east or west rather than north or south when looking for an area to put Park City with.

Chair Facer thanked Mayor Beerman for his comments and turned the time to Glenn Wright to address the commission regarding Summit County.

Glenn explained he had talked with the legislature about redistricting in previous cycles and felt that the legislature would hopefully be receptive to the commission. He then presented his views on two distinct communities of interest within Summit County. He suggested that Summit County could essentially be split into Western Summit County which he would define as the area around the Park City School district, and Eastern Summit County essentially consisting of the rest of the county. Neither community would have enough people for a full district, but have a number of factors that make them a coherent community. He suggested that Western Summit County would require some population for a house district and a good district would pick up population from Salt Lake County. He suggested that Eastern Summit County could be combined with Wasatch County as they have some similarities to one another as well. Glenn suggested that for a State Senate district Wasatch and Summit counties should serve as the core of a district given their economic and environmental concerns and similarities. He suggested picking

up additional population from nearby ski areas. For congressional districts he suggested Summit County would be more aligned with Salt Lake County.

Chair Facer thanked Glenn for his comments.

He then explained that the software available on the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission website has up to date population data and can be viewed down to the census block level. He explained that part of the puzzle is getting districts together by using the blocks with their varying population and geographic sizes. He mentioned that any comments would be considered part of the public record and would be shared with the legislature and that if anyone has comments in the future the commission would gladly accept those through the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission website or through email.

Chair Facer then proceeded to present some of the timeline for redistricting, mentioning that comments would be accepted through approximately October 22, and that the commission would be presenting their maps to the legislature on November 1. He explained that the Legislative Redistricting Committee would also be holding public hearings and encouraged people to give comments there as well.

Commissioner Thorne told the audience that staff is available to help people give comments and understand the redistricting software available at [uirc.utah.gov](http://uirc.utah.gov). He emphasized that public comments help the commission to make informed decisions about areas they may not know as well.

### **VIII. Presentation: Redistricting – Beau Bayless**

Chair Facer then turned the time to Beau Bayless to present on the process for public comment. Beau then spoke about the importance of public comment and explained the various avenues for public comment. Comments will be accepted through email at [uirccomments@utah.gov](mailto:uirccomments@utah.gov) and through our website [uirc.utah.gov](http://uirc.utah.gov). He reiterated Commissioner Thorne's point that staff can help the public with the mapping software and encouraged the audience to give any and all input they had.

Commissioner Thorne then explained that all the mapping sessions are live streamed as well and encouraged people to give input during those sessions.

An audience member then asked about submitting communities of interest online and staff explained that the community of interest tool and a tutorial are both available on the commission website. Chair Facer then explained that the various submitted communities of interest can then be viewed together to help give the commissioners an idea of what areas people want to keep together and where those areas overlap.

Commissioner Hillyard then spoke about some of his experience in creating maps for the past few weeks, and mentioned the importance of getting the population number at the right level. He restated the question of what counties to include with Summit or Wasatch county, but then explained how it can be difficult because any action on one area has an effect on the areas nearby.

An audience member then asked how software and computers are being implemented.

Chair Facer answered that the commission had considered using Artificial Intelligence (AI) or algorithm that can draw maps, but that they felt that some of the required and possible decisions were important to do by hand and with the input from the public.

An audience member asked about the allowed population deviations.

Chair Facer answered that the commission had worked to ensure that the deviations adopted by the Legislative Committee were followed and then explained the various allowed deviations. Those deviation numbers can be found on our website at [uirc.utah.gov](http://uirc.utah.gov).

Commissioner Thorne mentioned that the numbers on the website are the outside limits and that the commission was working to create smaller deviations. Chair Facer then explained that the other required criteria have to be balanced with the population requirements and can justify some population deviation.

Commissioner Hale then addressed the earlier question about computer usage and mentioned that there is indeed software that could create fully balanced maps by population. She then emphasized the importance of getting public input to create maps with more of a human touch that take considerations that the computer software doesn't include.

## **IX. Presentation: Public Hearing Format – Gordon Haight**

Chair Facer then turned the time to Gordon Haight.

Gordon presented the procedure and timeframe for giving public comments and emphasized that the commission wanted to hear from everyone interested in giving a comment.

## **X. Open Public Comment: Chair Rex Facer**

Chair Facer then turned the time to the public to give comments.

Ed Ruttan from Summit County then addressed the commission. His comments suggested that Summit County should be considered a single community and he felt that over the next 10 years Eastern Summit County would grow even more similar to Western Summit County. He also mentioned that he felt the current congressional districts did not give fair representation to Salt Lake City.

Jennifer Boehme from the Utah Education Association then addressed the commission. Her comments centered on State School Board districts. She explained that she felt urban and rural schools had different concerns, and even that various suburban districts have different concerns from one another and suggested the commission work to avoid splitting local school districts.

Margaret Olson, Summit County Attorney, addressed the commission. Her comments centered on the difficulties of Summit County being split into so many house and senate districts and mentioned that she was in a different district than her neighbors. She suggested the commission work to give Summit County one house representative or one senate representative.

Katy Owens Hubler from Pinebrook explained that her neighborhood was located in the midst of several splits and she had neighbors in both a different house district as well as a separate senate district. She asked the commission to work to avoid splitting her neighborhood but also to avoid splitting the greater Park City area mentioned before and suggested following the Park City School District boundaries for that area.

Kris Campbell from an unincorporated area of Park City then addressed the commission. He explained that he understood that due to the number of districts, there would be areas in the same senate district but separate house districts and asked the commission to avoid placing those areas through a neighborhood. He presented several such areas in Summit County. He also suggested using elementary school boundaries as a community of interest. He further addressed that the Legislature is interested in full map submissions and asked if the Commission can make the community of interest submissions publicly available to be used for those submissions.

Commissioner Baker addressed the request for the communities of interest to be made available and explained that staff was working on it and would have a layer available soon.

Danny Fugal from Heber City then addressed the commission. He explained some of his experiences living in the area and mentioned that it can be difficult to balance the various lifestyles and perspectives of various communities. He stated that he would work to share the information and help gather input from people that may not have been heard from as of yet.

Commissioner Bishop asked the audience to help address what counties and areas Summit and Wasatch should be combined with when necessary such as for state senate or state school board.

Terri Goodall from Wasatch County then addressed the commission. Her comments focused on keeping economic communities of interest together. She also asked about areas with planned growth and how that can be considered.

Chair Facer suggested that one way to for the commission to consider those is simply through public input so the commission can be aware of such areas. Commissioner Bishop responded to the previous question and explained that while consideration of growth is an excellent idea, the numbers used in mapping are the census numbers which don't account for new growth since the census.

Commissioner Hillyard added that was the reason for redistricting every ten years, to account for the changes in not too large a timeframe.

Commissioner Thorne also asked that if the public submits communities of interest to please give explanations in their comments.

Commissioner Hillyard spoke about communities of interest are intrinsically subjective. One member of the public might submit one idea and their neighbor might submit a drastically different idea. In contrast, population numbers are objective.

Bill Goodall then addressed the commission. His comments focused on getting input from local elected officials. He noted that Swiss Days was occurring in Midway during this hearing and suggested that the commission reach out to the various mayors and other officials that might be at that event.

Chair Facer explained that staff and commissioners had been in contact with mayors and thanked the public for their attendance considering the other events occurring. Commissioner Thorne encouraged the public to help other people they know to submit comments and to give comments throughout the process. Gordon then mentioned that the Legislative Redistricting Committee would be holding a hearing in Park City in the near future and suggested that the public can give the same comments to the Legislature.

A member of the public asked why there was a commission and a committee and asked about the process for facilitating the maps from each group.

Commissioner Hillyard answered, explaining some basics of the redistricting power in the Utah constitution as well as some history of Proposition 4. He further explained that the commission and legislature are not in competition with each other. Various commissioners then restated the importance of public input and mentioned that the current school board map was actually submitted by a member of the public.

#### **XI. Close Public Comment: Chair Rex Facer**

Chair Facer asked for any final comments and receiving no comments closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

#### **XII. Commission Discussion and Direction to Staff: Gordon Haight**

Chair Facer asked for any final comments or discussion points from the Commission.

Commissioner Baker emphasized the importance of communities of interest and again asked the public to please give submissions and help to inform the commissioners.

Commissioner Hale also asked that people don't get hung up and worried they need to submit full maps with all the numbers balanced. She explained that the types of comments submitted during this meeting were very helpful and the type of thing the commissioners were looking for.

#### **XIII. Adjourn**

Chair Facer then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

*Commissioner Hale moved to adjourn the meeting.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 1:39 PM*